

# **The Civil War: Through the Eyes of Hoosier Women— Sarah Bush Johnson Lincoln**

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## **Topic (Overall theme):**

“Through the Eyes of Hoosier Women” highlights one person—a woman—and her life as she sees it paralleling major events, places and people leading up to and during the Civil War. The introductory strategies—walking timeline and first-person presentation--initiate a research and creative study that can focus on other women (and men) and their roles, influences, challenges and accomplishments related to any major historical event, whether local or global.

## **Classroom sessions:**

The lesson, designed for two or more sessions, sets the stage for further research into roles of women during the Civil War period by demonstrating with a first- person presentation ([Script](#)) and providing a guide sheet ([Bio-Data Sheet](#)). Further sessions may lead students to research and interpret by “seeing through the eyes” of selected persons. (See Attachment for a list of [Hoosier women](#) who lived at the time of the Civil War.)

## **Grade Level(s):**

4th grade (adaptable for upper grades)

## **Purpose:**

To introduce students to the personalized views, roles, responsibilities, challenges and influences of Hoosier women (and men) representing different locations, lifestyles and perspectives related to the Civil War; To reinforce research, mapping, chronology and higher order thinking skills (interpretation, creativity, investigative research), as well as reading, writing, speaking, math and the arts skills.

## **\*Geography Standards Addressed:**

*Spatial Terms*—2-Use mental maps to organize information about people, places and locations when researching data for first person presentations;

*Places and Regions*—4-Identify physical and human characteristics of places; 6-Relate influences of culture and experiences on people’s perceptions, particularly those of and about women;

*Human Systems*—9-Understand how forces of cooperation and control influence people;

*Uses of Geography*—17-Apply geography to interpreting past as it influenced roles of women in the Civil War period and since.

**\*Indiana Social Studies Academic Standards Addressed:**

Apply each of the following as related to women's roles prior to, during and following the Civil War:

- 4.1.12-Identify roles of individuals, groups and movements in social conflicts;
- 4.1.13-Assess the participation of Indiana citizens;
- 4.1.16-Research social and political movements and roles;
- 4.1.23-Develop and interpret timelines depicting people, events and movements;
- 4.1.25-Identify causes of problems and challenges confronting people and evaluate solutions from a past and present perspective;
- 4.5.8-Identify contributions and challenges of various cultures, racial and religious groups, as well as individuals.

**Objectives:**

- To put women in "history" by raising awareness levels about individual and group roles of women during the Civil War and later (history)
- To understand and analyze changes and interactions of Hoosier women in major social and work roles during the Civil War period (geography)(economics);
- To recognize and compare the contributions of both women on the home and war fronts (sociology, political science);
- To extrapolate from roles and influences of women during the war and trace the impact on future rights and roles (citizenship).

**\*Teacher Background Materials:**

Major background sources for this plan, script and timeline are drawn from a variety of primary sources (documents, diaries, autobiographies, photos, speeches) and secondary sources (biographies, news clippings and journals, encyclopedias, and websites). Specific ones are A timeline also introduces major events leading up to, during and following the Civil War (See Attachment for list from which to select appropriate [Dates and Events](#) for class.) A thumbnail sketch of Hoosier women provides leads to persons from varying locations throughout the state. (See Attachment of [Hoosier Women](#).)

**\*Purpose of Materials:**

**Walking Timeline** (constructed on file folders with a series of sheets listing significant dates and events, each attached horizontally to both sides to allow the folder to stand in tent fashion, to be viewed from a distance and from any angle, and to be flexibly selected and arranged chronologically as needed to focus on varying topics (See Attachment for making [timeline](#).)

**First Person Script** of Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln (Abe Lincoln's stepmother) speaking to Dennis Hanks (Abe's cousin) and the class (See attachment for [Script](#))

**Chart Paper and Markers** for brainstorming and recording facts and impressions (Who? What? When? Where? How? Why?) from the presentation and timeline walk

**Bio-Data Sheet** corresponding to above chart for cooperative group research and

future presentations (See attachment of [Bio-Data Sheet](#))

**Progress Line** (optional) for group assessment listing major responsibilities: (1) Group tasks assigned; (2) Research started; (3) Research finished; (4) Data organized into script; (5) Presentation rehearsed; and (6) Presentation ready; and **Cards** identifying each group for moving along the line to mark progress and evaluate group cooperation.

### **Procedures:**

The lesson plan assumes that the students have some knowledge of the Civil War and the life of Abraham Lincoln. Each step in the procedures guides students through a process leading to Big IDEAs at the end of the lesson(s). The IDEAS match with the standards and driving questions listed for the lesson.

**Introduction/Inquiry:** Introduce the lesson by having students assume the role of a person living between (1788-1869) by walking along a file folder timeline arranged chronologically across the floor. Gather students into small groups to discuss what happened, who made it happen, when it happened, where it happened, how it happened and why it happened. As they are discussing, a person made up as an elderly woman enters the room and . . .

Development #1: Without any introduction, the lady (in white cap and carrying a black shawl) seats herself as a knock is heard. She begins a first-person presentation reviewing through her own eyes her life leading up to and through the Civil War (See attachment for script). The script is embedded with facts about the roles, rights and influences of women during her lifetime.

Development #2: Following the presentation, students interview the presenter (Sarah Bush Lincoln) who remains in role throughout. If students ask a question that she could not have answered during her lifetime ( ), she acts confused and says she does not know. The teacher records the question for further research.

Extension #1: The teacher then leads a brainstorming session by recording on a large chart students' responses to questions about what they learned from the presentation and what they already know about Civil War events and people: Who was the person or group? What was the person(s) like? What happened? When did it happen and where? How was it important?

Extension #2: Students select from the brainstorm chart, the list of Hoosier women or other sources a person (Aunt Katie Coffin) or group (escaping slaves, conductors on the Underground Railroad) living during the Civil War period to research and present through their choice of a single or group first-person format, etc). Students organize by groups or individually to research their person(s) and prepare a presentation with simple props and costumes.

Assessment: The assessment begins early and continues throughout with each group posting their progress on the progress line at designated times; as the teacher poses driving questions for discussion based on standards given above as a review and guide to more research; when classmates pose as critics to assess first-person presentations with criteria and rubrics cooperatively identified by the class early in the process.

Subjects: Students may enhance their presentations with original documents (primary resources), maps, music, photos, original drawings and transparencies, taped interviews, video clips, and other audio-visual aids, as well as captioned artifact displays (costumes, weapons, tools).

**\*Teaching Strategies:**

Strategies used in the lesson(s) and in lessons to follow are:

- Focused listening for details and perceptions
- Planning and script-writing for first-person presentations
- Walking (Human) timelines for the period
- Mind mapping
- Role playing
- Questioning
- Interviewing
- Cooperative planning
- Researching primary, secondary and technology resources
- Group assessing with rubrics
- Conducting first-person presentations

**\*Assessments (key questions to simulate critical thinking):**

Driving questions to guide students in research and to be used as continuing assessments:

Who? Who (women, men, groups) played influential roles during the Civil War?

What? What roles did they play? What contributions did they make? What did they wish most to accomplish? What made them unique?

How? How did they accomplish their purposes?

When? When were they most influential? How was the sequence important to what happened later?

Why? Why do we remember them today?

**Adaptations and/or Extensions:**

1. Select specific women's rights (voting, property) to be researched by making timelines and/or first person presentations. Use a variety of resources—web, print, primary documents, interviews, etc.
2. Use the same procedures to research special events, groups and individuals—minorities, Underground Railroad conductors, suffragists, Ku Klux Klan, Quakers).
3. Write appropriate poems and slogans for different women and rights advocate groups.
4. To reinforce names, accomplishments and connections, ask students to greet each other in the role of given persons using thumbnail biographies and the timeline.
5. Continue using folder timelines throughout the year by adding events and dates for making connections and reinforcing time and place events.